

CONNECTION

Music makers

Alley on Main hits its stride



**WORKING FROM
THE FARM**

**CHOOSE YOUR OWN
ADVENTURE**



By SHIRLEY BLOOMFIELD, CEO
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

Fresh opportunities

New funding supports rural broadband

Closing the digital divide is an ongoing effort and not a one-time mission. Every month the diligent work of NTCA members helps to bridge these gaps. Even in the most remote areas, telcos are building world-class broadband networks and enabling critical, life-altering technologies and applications.

Our leaders here in Washington, D.C., continue to notice the gains being made in communities like yours. While the 118th Congress is still getting its feet under it, so to speak, we are seeing interest in several broadband-related bills that could help our members and their customers, and federal agencies continue to implement and execute on various broadband funding programs.

As community-based providers with a long history of service and successful performance, telcos are in a good position to vie for critical financial support for broadband deployment, such as the \$42.5 billion Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program. This year, we expect the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to announce allocation of this money to the states and U.S. territories, and, eventually, grants could be given out to providers like yours to serve even more people.

In anticipation of these distributions, we spent much of 2022 on Capitol Hill and with local, state and federal agencies to urge them to work closely with NTCA members. We also brought key decision-makers to NTCA meetings, conferences and webinars, and we provided members-only tools to help position telcos.

Such efforts pay dividends. For example, NTCA member companies have already received more than \$1 billion in U.S. Department of Agriculture ReConnect loans and grants. Job one for NTCA and its members continues to be pursuing policies that will enable small rural providers to keep delivering on the promises of broadband connectivity every day and for decades to come. 🗨️

Fiber internet

It makes a difference




Fiber internet makes essential tools and services possible: commerce, education, entertainment, personal communication and more.


Here are a few examples, highlighted by the Fiber Broadband Association, offering a detailed look at how fiber networks make a difference:




1 FASTER INTERNET: Creating a network capable of keeping up with growing consumer demand for videos, music streaming and online gaming is no easy task. Fiber, however, consistently outpaces the fastest download and upload speeds of older technologies like cable, DSL and wireless.



2 INCREASED HOME VALUES: Studies have shown that fast, reliable broadband is rated as the single most important amenity for rented or multifamily homes. Access to fiber broadband increased rental and property values by as much as 8%.



3 FIBER NETWORKS HELP LOCAL ECONOMIES: There's growing evidence fiber connectivity not only encourages businesses to stay in their locations but also helps them grow and become more productive. It even attracts new businesses, particularly in high-tech industries.



4 SUSTAINABLE: The glass that makes fiber work so well is made from sand, which is plentiful and requires less energy and creates less pollution to acquire than older technologies.

This could have been an email

How digital literacy is shaping communication in the workplace

Story by DREW WOOLLEY



Clear communication can be a challenge at the best of times. But particularly for remote workers relying on digital chat and email tools, it's never been easier for wires to get crossed, even during simple exchanges.

ALWAYS ONLINE

In some cases, the generation gap can rear its head even before the first word has been typed or spoken. While baby boomers and members of Generation X tend to prefer doing business face-to-face or over the phone, younger generations are much more digitally inclined.

According to research from Purdue University, both millennials and Generation Z or Zoomers — people born between the mid-1990s and about 2010 — tend to prefer communicating by email, instant message, text and social media. Having grown up with access to high-speed internet, Zoomers expect a rapid response to messages, based on a survey by marketing company LeadSquared.

THANKS.

It's no secret periods at the end of lone sentences are falling by the wayside in texts, chats and social media. For some, it's a punctuational pet peeve. But for younger colleagues, the reappearance of that little dot can carry extra meaning.

For example, while some millennials and older generations might put a period after a short message like "Thanks" or "Good job," for Gen Z, that hard stop can imply coldness or sarcasm. Younger professionals are more likely to use exclamation points to express enthusiasm. So don't worry, they aren't yelling at you.

TBH, IDK

For those who came of age texting before phones could predict what you're trying to type, quick abbreviations for common phrases were a must. BTW (by the way), TBH (to be honest), IMO (in my opinion), JK (just kidding) and IDK (I don't know) are just a few examples.

While many of these abbreviations are now part of the internet's vocabulary, they can be a stumbling block for anyone who didn't grow up seeing them daily. When clarity is a priority, consider taking the extra few seconds to spell it out. 🗨️

A picture's worth a thousand words

As platforms like Slack and Microsoft Teams become more popular, emoji are rapidly invading work chats. Many are self-explanatory and can help add some extra expression to a message. Others can be confusing or misinterpreted. So be sure you know what message you're sending.



While many people use the **smile emoji** to denote, well, a smile, some younger professionals interpret it more ironically. That may seem confusing, but just ask yourself if there's any warmth in that smile's cold, dead eyes.



By and large, the **thumbs up** should be saved as a response to a clear yes or no question, or to acknowledge that you've seen a comment that doesn't require a longer reply. Offering a thumbs up in conversations that are any more nuanced could cause confusion about whether any follow-up is needed or suggest you aren't giving the exchange your full attention.



This one is just a public service announcement. Despite — or maybe because — the **crying laughing emoji** is the world's most popular, according to Adobe, Gen Z has officially dubbed it cliché and uncool. If you're looking to stay up on the trends, consider changing things up with the skull emoji to let them know their joke really killed.

Working hard

Fast internet connects rural communities to new opportunities

One thing I very much appreciate about leading Foothills Communications is that we're here to support the communities we serve as powerfully and in as many ways as we can. One of the best examples of this is our fast and reliable internet network, which opens opportunities for individuals, businesses, government and just about anyone who uses it.



RUTH CONLEY
Chief Executive Officer

This potential to help others is particularly on my mind after seeing a report that there were about 10 million job openings late last year across the nation. Now, those numbers do fluctuate, but I think it's fair to say we're in a time when opportunity exists — you just must be able to take advantage.

Fortunately, our fast internet service can be the key needed to unlock the world of work-from-home jobs, which can range from positions with call centers and medical records companies to careers in technology or marketing. Really, that's just scratching the surface. No matter the industry, the innovative communications services provided by Foothills give you the opportunity to pursue these jobs.

Internet networks like ours can tie small towns and remote areas to national employers and well-paying professions. But having the resources and skills needed to do these jobs is just the beginning. After all, you still must land that new job.

The world of employment has changed rapidly in recent years, and tapping into all the opportunities requires fast internet and some new perspective. Really, it's a fascinating landscape.

Consider that many companies and job recruitment sites now use artificial intelligence to weed through resumes, screening them so a person only sees those who make the cut. It's something that changes how you think about applying for a job. For instance, a CNBC article suggested listing job titles in reverse-chronological order, because the machine-based screening systems appreciate clearly structured information. Similarly, when writing a bulleted list of work experience, the first one should tie into a specific job requirement.

Also, internet-based companies like Indeed, Glassdoor and Monster connect job seekers with employers. For job seekers, these companies can provide not only daily updates of potential jobs but also offer tips for succeeding in a competitive job market.

Simply, the rules of the employment game have changed and, fortunately, you have the resources to change with them. Our communications services can help sites like Indeed come to life. These companies provide daily updates on new jobs, email blasts, tips and more.

Then, when you make a connection with a potential new employer, fast internet service can add even more of a polish. When remote jobs are on the table, videoconference interviews are common. Thankfully, fast, reliable internet can create lag-free, professional connections that put you and your abilities in the best possible light.

If all of this seems like a challenge to navigate, this same internet network can help with that, too. YouTube and TikTok have plenty of examples of experts offering advice. Meanwhile, professional social media sites like LinkedIn can help you boost your profile with potential employers.

All the resources and opportunities are made possible by fast internet service by Foothills Communications, and we're committed to always providing you with the services needed to succeed. 📧



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The Foothills Connection is a bimonthly newsletter published by Foothills Communications, ©2023. It is distributed without charge to all customers of the company.



Foothills is a member-owned cooperative that has been serving residents and businesses in Eastern Kentucky since 1951. In the early days, we only offered telephone service over copper wires. Over the years, we have expanded our network and now provide broadband internet and cable TV services over fiber optic facilities to much of our service area, which includes Magoffin County and portions of Johnson County and Lawrence County. We love being part of the communities we serve. Our customers are our families, friends and neighbors.

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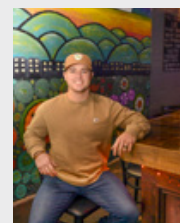
Foothills Mission Statement

"To provide the latest in communications at affordable prices with exceptional service."

Produced for Foothills Communications by:



On the Cover:



Jordan Pelfrey, co-owner of Alley on Main, brings in regional and national acts to Paintsville with this unique venue. See story Page 8.

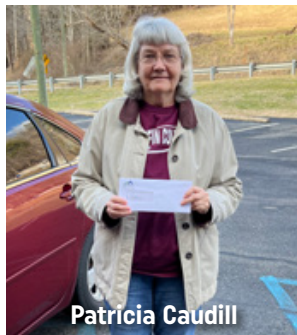
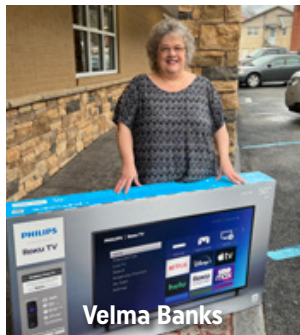
Photography by
John Michael Laney

Big Prize winners announced

Foothills Communications is pleased to announce the winners of its annual Big Prize Contest.

Congratulations to the following customers:

- TV Prize winner: Velma Banks of Johnson County
- Internet Prize winner: Gary Webb Jr. of Lawrence County
- Platinum Customer Prize winner: Carl (not pictured) and Patricia Caudill of Magoffin County



Happy Easter!

Foothills Communications wishes you a joyful Easter weekend. In observance of the holiday, our office will be closed **April 7 for Good Friday**. However, our phone lines are open 24/7 at 888-262-3782.

Get your gospel music on!

THE EAST KENTUCKY
**GOSPEL
 FEST**

**APRIL
 28 & 29**

**LAWRENCE COUNTY
 COMMUNITY CENTER**

Enjoy live music, free parking and concessions. Doors open Friday, April 28, at 5 p.m., and the evening concert starts at 6 p.m. On Saturday, doors open at noon with a matinee at 1 p.m., followed by the evening concert at 6 p.m. A love offering will be received.

For more information, contact Violet Maynard at 614-496-1618, or Shona Smith at 606-686-3632.



**Know what's below.
 Call before you dig.**



OUTDOOR adventures

The Southeast is a treasure trove of thrilling nature excursions

Story by ANNE BRALY

Photo courtesy of Tennessee Department of Tourism

The Southeast harbors its own kind of magic when it comes to outdoor attractions among its ancient mountains and waterways.

“It’s no secret that the Southeast United States is a remarkable hot spot for adventure,” says Terri Chapin, program coordinator for Outdoor Chattanooga. “Thrill-seekers are cool with the variety of outdoor adventures in the abundant lakes, rivers and mountain streams.”

From the region’s national parks and forests to world-class whitewater and wind sports, there’s something for everyone. And when the day is done, Terri suggests balancing your nature fix with a little urban exploration. It’s not too far from the forest to good food. “Here is the secret sauce — the Southeast blends both urban and the wild to offer endless possibilities for multiple cool adventures in one day,” she says.



ABOVE: Kayaking along the Tennessee River is very popular.

LEFT: The South’s sandstone cliffs make for great rock climbing.

RUNNING THE RAPIDS

The Southeast is blessed with numerous rivers offering whitewater excitement. From the Nantahala and the Green River in North Carolina to Chattahoochie Whitewater Express in Georgia, you’re in for an adrenaline rush at every stroke of the paddle.

The **Ocoee River** in eastern Tennessee boasts some of the best freestyle kayaking in the U.S. It was once a dammed waterway, but the Tennessee Valley Authority has been releasing recreational flows since the 1970s, creating a 10-mile stretch of Class III whitewater.

Rapids like Grumpy, Broken Nose, Flipper and Tablesaw create challenges for even the most experienced paddlers. But if you have the skills, the Ocoee has thrills. And if you don’t? Consider rafting. There are several rafting enterprises that will give you the thrills in a more-protected type experience. For a complete list of outfitters, visit timetoraft.com.

The **Chattooga River** begins in the mountains of North Carolina before



Photo courtesy of Outdoor Chattanooga

heading south to form a natural border between South Carolina and Georgia. Though it has a reputation of being one of the most unforgettable whitewater experiences in the South — thanks, in part, to its inclusion in the film “Deliverance” — the Chattooga is actually a river for all, from families to experienced paddlers.

There are two distinct sections. The calmest, Section III, is recommended for kayakers ages 8 and older and has numerous swimming holes. Leave Section IV for those with more experience. It has heart-stopping, Class IV rapids. For a list of rafting outfitters and guides, log onto visitoconeesc.com.

PEDAL POWER

Whether you want a strenuous mountain ride or prefer to pedal through flatter terrain, great cycling trails snake through the forests of the Southeast.

The trail running through Alabama’s **Chewacla State Park** takes you along some of the most beautiful parts of the Southern Appalachian Trail — 696 acres of it, to be exact. Some of it is good for beginners, while other parts add more thrills for experienced cyclists. There are some hand-built trails, as well as the state’s only

wall ride — a 15-foot-high arc wall known as the Great Wall of Chewacla. For more information, visit aotourism.com.

With terrain ranging from flatlands to challenging mountain climbs, some of Kentucky’s best cycling trails are found in **Mammoth Cave National Park**. Mammoth Cave Railroad Bike and Hike Trail is one of those rails-to-trails experiences that offers a choice of adventures. Ride or hike the 9-mile graveled trail that, back in the 1880s, was the rail line of the Mammoth Cave Railroad. The trail offers scenic overlooks, historic sites and interpretive displays along the way. Find more excitement at kygetaway.com.

HANG TIME

Hang gliding is a heart-stopping thrill ride that gives you a bird’s-eye view of the landscape. And the mountains around the Southeast offer the perfect opportunity to take a flying leap.

If you want a beautiful hang gliding location that offers stunning views of the Tennessee Valley, **Lookout Mountain Flight Park** is where you can see the “Grand Canyon of Tennessee” spread out before you.

Experienced guides offer extensive lessons with beginners starting out in the valley below. Altitude and speed on these tandem flights are gained by a tow line attached to a small aircraft. Jumping off the mountain above is only for rated pilots. For more information, visit flylookout.com.

The Wright Brothers took to the air first in **Kitty Hawk, North Carolina**, and now you can, too. There are no mountains, but there is wind, dunes and lots of room to run and land in soft sand. There are schools to teach you how, and it’s a good way to learn the art of hang gliding. Fly on over to kittyhawk.com for more information.

ROCK OUT

When your adventurous spirit calls out to let you know it’s time to hit the rocks, the Southeast’s sandstone cliffs are made for the sport.

The Red River Gorge occupies 29,000 acres within the beauty of Kentucky’s

Daniel Boone National Forest. Its climbing routes are a favorite with some of the best climbs and bouldering options in the world. Log on to redrivergorge.com for more information.

Climbers flock to the **Tennessee Wall** just north of downtown Chattanooga for hundreds of routes for climbing and bouldering. The Tennessee Wall is about 2 miles of cracks, overhanging walls, roofs and other features in a beautiful setting overlooking the Tennessee River in the Tennessee River Gorge. Visit trgt.org for more information.

Go bouldering at **Horse Pens 40**, a privately owned recreation area near Steele, Alabama. It’s home to a highly concentrated boulder field scattered among deciduous trees and grasslands, and it’s been attracting boulderers for decades. There’s a small fee to enter, \$8-\$10, and camping is available for a few dollars more. Check it out at hp40.com. 📍

BELOW: Running the rapids on the Ocoee River.



Photo courtesy of Outdoor Chattanooga

Alley on Main is available for special events.

MUSIC ALLEY

Alley on Main makes new waves in the industry

Story by JEN CALHOUN

Jordan Pelfrey always figured graduating high school would mean moving off to bigger cities in different states. And it did — for a while, at least.

After graduating college with a degree in geology, he lived in St. Louis, Atlanta and Chicago. He took on the various career paths a geologist typically travels — working for a museum, a landfill and a gas company. But music drew him back home. “When I lived in Chicago and Atlanta, I’d go out to all these little venues and listen to music,” Jordan says. “There was all this great music coming from Kentucky, and I thought, ‘Why doesn’t Paintsville have a place to showcase all this talent?’”

It’s why Jordan opened Alley on Main in 2021 with the help of his wife, Lindsey Pelfrey, and his father, Cliff Pelfrey. Alley on Main offers a place to hold special events and a stage for local, regional and national talent in an intimate concert setting in one of Paintsville’s historic downtown properties. “So, no, I didn’t think I’d be back,” Jordan says with a laugh. “But I’ve moved in, and we’re really trying to make something happen.”

MUSIC MAKERS

Since opening in 2021, Alley on Main has hosted artists from all over the country at the club and during its popular music festival, Alley Fest. “We’ve had over 10 Grammy award-winning artists come through our doors, and we treat them first class,” Jordan says.



Jordan Pelfrey brings regional and national performers to Alley on Main.

Photos by John Michael Laney

Alley’s visiting artists have included everyone from Eastern Kentucky legends Crystal Gayle, The Kentucky Headhunters and Tyler Booth to up-and-coming artists like Sierra Ferrell, a West Virginian whose unique country/gypsy jazz/folk stylings have brought her Grammy nominations and critical acclaim across the world. “We’ve had a lot of people from around the country come here who had never been to Paintsville before,” Jordan says. “One drove from the Alabama coast just to come see Sierra Ferrell. They said they wanted to see her in an intimate show because she was about to blow up.”



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: The venue's stage is popular with musicians because of the intimate nature of the room.

A colorful mural creates a fun vibe inside Alley on Main.

Alley on Main serves brick oven-baked pizza during events.



HISTORIC HANGOUT

While music is the main draw for Alley, the setting makes it worth the trip. Situated inside the 102-year-old Arcade building in downtown Paintsville, Alley's shows hold 150 to 175 people during a seated concert and nearly 300 people when it's standing room only. During the venue's popular Alley Fest events, it can usually accommodate about 3,000 people inside and outside.

Cliff, who co-owns the business alongside his son, bought and renovated the building a few years back. He had planned to make it into a steakhouse, but ultimately gave up on the idea. "They had already done all this work on the building," Jordan says. "But he was thinking of getting rid of it, so I started a project to renovate it into a music venue in early 2021, then opened it in August."

When the building went up, an arcade referred to a kind of shopping mall with different stores and entertainment venues — all under one roof. "Ours is a small, indoor alleyway really," Jordan says. "There are still some original storefronts along it. We left one intact so people could see it. It leads to what used to be an old black-and-white silent movie theater."

The Pelfreys also rent out the venue for special events. Jordan says they're planning some theme nights, which could include a Valentine's Day show and dinner and others. "We want to get the community involved with us," he says. "We want to let them know we're a positive light here."

MAPPING OUT THE FUTURE

Since opening, Jordan says he's found his way in the business. In addition to promoting music festivals like Alley Fest, he's also started representing artists through his company, AOM Booking & Management.

He sees a future in Eastern Kentucky that hearkens back to its musical roots and an Appalachian culture that has influenced generations of Americans. He also credits

companies like Foothills Communications, whose fiber broadband helps Alley on Main seamlessly connect to a world of music lovers through Facebook, Instagram and the venue's website. Things are looking up, he says, and Jordan is happy to be part of it.

"Of course, it's sad that the coal mines and everything that supported the community over the years are gone," he says. "But it feels good to try to breathe life back into it and put Paintsville and Eastern Kentucky back on the map." 🗨️

CONCERTS, EVENTS AND MORE

Alley on Main is a concert and special events venue at 241 Main St. in Paintsville. To find out more about renting it, or to see a list of upcoming shows and buy tickets, visit the website at alleymainky.com.

You can also follow the very active Alley on Main Facebook page or call 606-963-2004. Jordan Pelfrey also offers talent management and booking services through his company, AOM Booking & Management. His website is aombookingandmanagement.com.

Family TV night

Great family binges for all ages

With the wealth of streaming services available today, there have never been so many viewing options available at the tap of a few buttons. But the constant barrage of new TV shows and movies can make it difficult to sort the wheat from the chaff, especially if you're looking for something the whole family can enjoy.

While services like Disney+ come ready with a huge catalog of family classics, other major streamers are still building up their libraries of kid-friendly content. Here are a few suggestions to help your family start exploring the latest offerings.





AGES 4+

“Bluey,” Disney+ — Inexhaustible Blue Heeler dog Bluey turns everyday life into amazing adventures that stimulate her imagination and emotional resilience. Broken up into short, nine-minute episodes, the Australian animated show has garnered praise for providing constructive messages while remaining engaging for adults.

“Motown Magic,” Netflix — This feel-good series celebrates music, has colorful, eye-catching visuals and instills positive messages about self-confidence. For lovers of oldies, the soundtrack is also a great introduction to Motown and soul classics.

“Sesame Street,” HBO Max — Starting with the show’s 51st season in 2020, HBO Max became the official home of “Sesame Street.” Get access to new episodes immediately so your kids can experience the fun and entertaining brand of education that “Sesame Street” has offered for decades.

“Madagascar: A Little Wild,” Hulu — Drawing on the humor and animation that made the Madagascar movies popular, this musical comedy series follows four young animals in a rescue habitat in Central Park. The show celebrates being yourself and pursuing your dreams, no matter how wild.

“Shaun the Sheep,” Netflix — Adults and young kids alike can enjoy a laugh in this clay-mation series from the makers of “Wallace and Gromit.” Shaun’s barnyard misadventures with his cousin Timmy, sheepdog Bitzer, cat Pidsley and fellow sheep Shirley have even spun off into several movies available exclusively on Netflix.

AGES 7+

“Just Add Magic,” Amazon Prime Video — When Kelly discovers her grandmother’s mysterious cookbook in the attic, she and her best friends, Darbie and Hannah, find out there’s more magic to the recipes than just a secret ingredient. Loosely based on Cindy Callaghan’s popular book by the same name, the show offers magical fun for the whole family.

“Pokemon Journeys,” Netflix — This Netflix series is action-packed enough to grab the attention of new viewers and based on the anime series some parents may have watched when they were kids. Follow young trainer Ash as he travels the world learning about new Pokemon.

“Gravity Falls,” Disney+ — If your little

ones aren’t quite ready for shows like “Stranger Things” or sci-fi classics like “The X-Files,” “Gravity Falls” might be just the ticket. This show offers Pacific Northwest weirdness for the whole family as twins Mabel and Dipper Pines spend the summer with their great-uncle Stan investigating strange mysteries in Oregon.

“Star Wars: The Clone Wars,” Disney+ — Before there was a Disney series for every character in the Star Wars universe, “The Clone Wars” was filling in the gaps between the canonical Star Wars movies. The continuing adventures of Obi Wan, Anakin and young Palawan Ahsoka Tano feature enough surprisingly deep storytelling that parents might be as eager as their kids to hit play on the next episode.

“TrollsTopia,” Hulu — Picking up after the movie “Trolls: World Tour,” “TrollsTopia” follows Poppy as she attempts to unite delegates from the Country Western, Classical, Funk, Techno and Hard Rock tribes in one harmonious city. Watch as they learn to celebrate their differences with a variety of catchy tunes.

AGES 11+

“Raising Dion,” Netflix — Second grader Dion learns to balance super powers and villain battles with the everyday challenges of growing up. The mild violence and portrayals of bullying might be a little much for younger viewers, but tween audiences will find plenty to enjoy.

“The Hardy Boys,” Hulu — Based on the popular book series, this show follows Frank and Joe Hardy when they move from the city to their parents’ hometown of Bridgeport. When their dad takes on a secret investigation, it doesn’t take long for the Hardy boys to get drawn into the mystery.

“The Quest,” Disney+ — A new take on the reality competition series from the team behind “The Amazing Race,” “The Quest” drops eight teens into an immersive fantasy world where it’s their job to save the kingdom. Find out which contestant is The One while scratching that old “Legends of the Hidden Temple” itch.

“The Dark Crystal: Age of Resistance,” Netflix — This prequel to the 1982 dark fantasy movie from Jim Henson follows a group of Gelflings as they seek to stop power-hungry overlords from draining the life from their world. Parents who enjoyed the original will enjoy the shot of nostalgia, while younger viewers marvel at the stunning visuals. 📺

HIGH-TECH HOLLER

Execs trade
Orlando for life
on the farm

Story by JEN CALHOUN



David Shackelford and his wife, Kaay, now live full time on property that was once his grandparents' farm.

As a kid, David Shackelford loved spending his summers at his maternal grandparents' farm in Magoffin County. He remembers helping out with the tobacco crops, harvesting cucumbers for a nickel a bushel and picking up apples to keep the yellow jackets away. "We always had work to do, but it was always a good time," says David, whose father's job with Sears kept the family moving from place to place.

Eastern Kentucky loomed large in David's memories as he grew up, graduated with advanced degrees and progressed in his career. After his parents deeded the family farm to him and his brother a little more than a decade ago, David used it as a retreat from his busy life in Orlando, Florida. "It was a place I could come and get away from Orlando and the rat race," he says. "It's a different pace here."

MOVING ON UP

Now, David and his wife, Kaay, live on the farm full time, while David continues to work remotely with the help of Foothills Communications' fiber broadband service. It's given the Shackelfords the best of both worlds.

David, who is the senior director for global business intelligence with an international consulting company, is able to manage a team of 11 people from all over the world. "As a consulting company, we interact with large companies — Fortune 1000 companies," he says, referring to Fortune magazine's ranking of the 1,000 companies with the highest revenue in the U.S. "We provide consulting services like internal audits, business process improvements, and risk and compliance work for banks and financial institutions."

David's team works with data and creates reports and other tools to help companies make critical business decisions. "What we do is kind of like data mining," he says. "Our vision is to let the data tell the story. We're proud that our team has been able to change the way our company consumes data."

He's certain he could never have made the move without a reliable fiber internet connection. "I have international video calls with top leadership pretty often," he says. "I have to be able to share my screen in these

Photos by John Michael Laney



LEFT: When not working from home, David enjoys using his tractor to do some light farming.

BELOW: David works on a project in his woodworking shop and tool house.



Up until recently, Kaay, a CPA, worked remotely as an assistant controller for a company in Orlando. She retired in the summer of 2022, and she now stays active through volunteer work, a quilting club and gardening. David also hopes to ease into his retirement as the couple builds their new life in Magoffin County. He's started some light farming, and he loves using his tractor, woodworking and learning new things. "A lot of people around here have kidded me about the move," he says. "They look at me a little strange, like, 'Why here?' But I like that it's a different pace of life with so many good people. I know more of my neighbors on this 3-mile stretch of country road than I did in my neighborhood in Orlando. You just feel like the people around you here are the kind that would give the shirts off their backs to help you. I really believe that." 🗨️

meetings, and that takes speed and reliability. The performance of the internet is critical. We've got people from all over the world signing into our applications, so it's got to work."

SAVING GRACE

Over the years, the couple has fixed up the old farmhouse that David's grandfather built in 1947. They added a sunroom and a carport, and they have plans to build a greenhouse. "My brother ended up saying he may never plan to live here but that he'd come and visit us," David says. "So, we've been taking care of it. We've done a lot of work, and it kind of looks like a modern farmhouse now."



David Shackelford works remotely for an international business consulting firm from his home office in Magoffin County.

WHAT IS A GIG?

Simply put, having Gig speed from your internet provider means everything you do online is better. Streaming movies and TV shows? Easier. Gaming? Faster. Sharing pictures and files? Seamless.

A Gig, or gigabit, is a unit of measurement. A gigabit, or Gb, is 1,000 megabits. A megabit, or Mb, is 1,000 bits. Many internet carriers throughout the U.S. commonly offer speeds of 10 megabits per second, or Mbps. This is the rate of speed with which information goes from its source to devices. That information could be anything from music to movies to videos and music, while devices are things like computers, tablets, smart TVs and gaming consoles. The rate of speed also affects home alarm systems, Wi-Fi and any devices that require the internet to function.

A study released by the Fiber to the Home Council found that communities with widely available access to Gig service speeds make more money, making these speeds an undeniable perk for entrepreneurs, small businesses and big industries. In addition, companies that offer higher-paying jobs often only want to relocate to places with strong internet infrastructure, the study notes.

MEALS

that will make you

SQUEAL



Ham-bitious ways to use your leftovers

While much of the rest of the world celebrates the arrival of spring with lamb, in the U.S. pink, salty-sweet slices of cured pork, slathered in a sugary glaze, will fill many tables.

The problem, however, is that unless you buy a boneless ham by the pound or one of those small canned hams, you'll probably bring home a large bone-in ham from the market or treat yourself to one from the honey ham store. And more likely than not, after you serve dinner with a couple of side dishes, you're going to have a lot of leftovers.

There are so many ways to use up that ham that go beyond deviling or as a salad topper.

Here are three ideas to make the most of your leftover ham. They're wonderful by themselves, or just make a day of it and make them all, using up most, if not all, of that leftover ham. There's nothing better than a bowl of creamy ham soup with cheesy ham-studded biscuits and a delicious ham sandwich — with a twist.



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CREAMY POTATO HAM SOUP

- 4 strips of bacon
- 1/2 cup onion, finely chopped
- 3-4 medium potatoes, peeled and diced (2-3 cups)
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 4 cups chicken broth, preferably homemade (see note)
- 1 1/2 cups cooked ham, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1 cup corn, canned (drained) or frozen (no need to thaw)
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- Salt (to taste)
- 1 teaspoon fresh parsley, finely chopped

Saute bacon in a large stockpot over medium-high heat until crisp. Chop the bacon and set it aside on a plate, reserving bacon drippings in the pot. Add onion and potatoes to the pot and saute for 1-2 minutes until fragrant. Stir in flour and mix well until the flour is fully incorporated. Stir in chicken broth and mix until the soup is smooth and uniform. Bring the soup to a boil over medium-high heat. Cover and let it continue to boil for 10-15 minutes until the potatoes are fork tender.

Mash half of the potatoes in the



pot with a potato masher to help thicken the soup.

Stir in ham, corn, heavy cream and black pepper. Let the soup simmer over medium heat and whisk occasionally until thickened to a desired consistency, 5-10 minutes. If the chowder gets too thick, add a little water to dilute it. Add salt to taste. Serve topped with reserved crispy bacon and fresh parsley. Makes about 4 servings.

Note: To make homemade chicken stock, boil a whole chicken in water to cover with some chunks of onion and celery added. Simmer the chicken until tender. You can tell if it's tender by pulling on the leg. If the leg comes out easily, the chicken is ready. Save the chicken for chicken salad or a chicken casserole. But save the stock, too. Salt it, to taste, and use it right away for this soup, or let it cool, pour it into a gallon-size freezer bag and freeze it.



CHEESY HAM BISCUITS

These biscuits pull double duty as a side to soup or cut them in half, add a fried egg and make a breakfast biscuit.

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 cup salted butter (1 stick)
- 1 1/4 cups buttermilk
- 1/2 cup chopped ham
- 1 cup shredded extra sharp cheddar cheese

Preheat the oven to 450 F.
Mix dry ingredients. Cut butter into thin slices and then cut it into the flour

until pieces of butter are small. Add in the buttermilk slowly and incorporate with the flour mixture. Don't overmix.

Sprinkle a small amount of flour on a work surface and place dough on top of it. Press down to make flat and then add the ham and cheddar cheese to the top. Knead dough a few times to incorporate the ham and cheese.

Press or roll out into 1/2-inch thickness. Use a biscuit cutter or rim of a glass to cut out biscuits.

Place biscuits on a baking sheet and bake for 10-12 minutes. Makes about a dozen biscuits.



BAKED HAM SANDWICHES

This is a favorite vintage recipe from Encore! Nashville, a Junior League of Nashville publication from the 1970s. Prepare ahead: These sandwiches are best made early in the morning or the day before to give time for the "custard" to soak into the bread.

- 8 slices bread
- 2 tablespoons butter, softened
- 4 slices ham
- 4 slices sharp cheddar cheese
- 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
- 3 eggs, slightly beaten
- 2 cups evaporated milk or whole milk
- 1 teaspoon grated onion
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- Dash of Worcestershire sauce
- Dash of cayenne pepper

Trim crusts from bread and butter both sides well. Place 4 slices of bread

in a buttered baking dish. Place a piece of ham on each piece and cover with cheese, then top with remaining bread slices.

Combine remaining ingredients and pour over bread. Refrigerate all day or overnight. When ready to bake, spoon sauce over bread again and bake at 300 F, uncovered, until sandwiches are bubbly and golden brown on top, about 1 hour. Makes 4 servings.

Note: For a heartier sandwich, slices of tomato, avocado or bacon may be layered between the ham and cheese. 🗨️





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